

head office of the Bank during the past two months; and

(c) The action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) and (b). Punjab National Bank has reported that it has a scheme for payment of ex-gratia amount in the cases of all employees, who die while in service and that such claim cases are settled expeditiously. The bank has reported that all the 24 claims received by the Head Office of the Bank during the last two months have been settled.

(c) In view of the reply to parts (a) & (b) above, no further action appears necessary.

Procurement of Newsprint

3606. SHRI SHRAVAN KUMAR PATEL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Trading Corporation has succeeded in procuring newsprint from international market including the US at prices 24 to 40 percent below the lowest rate of procurement last year;

(b) if so, the efforts made in this regard; and

(c) the comparative rates at which different types of newsprints are being procured under various agreements signed this year and those during the past two years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b). As compared with the lowest CIF price at which newsprint was purchased during 1990-91, STC has succeeded in procuring newsprint during October 1991 at prices lower by about 12%

(Standard) and about 14% (Glazed) in terms of US\$ CIF price by making the purchases in a phased manner.

(c) Average CIF cost of purchases made by STC from GCA in Rs. PMT for the years 1989-90, 1990-91 and 1991-92 is given below:-

<i>Year</i>	<i>Standard</i>	<i>Glazed</i>
1989-90	10,559	13,268
1990-91	10,909	14,949
1991-92 (Apr-May '91)	12,744	17,440

(CIF pre-devaluation dollar rupee rates)

(CIF prices are based on the exchange rates on the dates of contracting).

Jahangir Nazarana Coin

3607. SHRI MOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken any action to retrieve the famous Jahangir Nazarana Coin weighing about eleven Kilogram of gold against which Prince Mukaram Jah, the successor of the late Nizam VII, took a loan from the Indo-Buez Bank, Geneva;

(b) whether the Government have investigated the matter to ascertain as to how it was taken out of the country;

(c) whether it was a violation of the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1973; and

(d) if so, the action taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) The Jahangir Nazarana Coin,

an antiquity, was put to auction in Geneva on November 9, 1987 but could not eventually be sold as the highest bids were less than the reserved price. Embassy of India, Berne (Switzerland) is in touch with concerned Swiss Department viz. Federal Department of Justice & Police to find out as to what can be done to retrieve the coin;

(b) The coin is reported to have been taken out of the country in a clandestine manner;

(c) and (d). The Central Bureau of Investigation has registered a case under Sections 120-B read with 380 and Section 25(1) of Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972 read with Section 3 of the said Act and under Section 380 IPC. Central Bureau of Investigation has not come to final finding in the case.

[Translation]

Widening of Outer Ring Road

3608. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the work to widen the Outer Ring Road in Delhi is going on for the last one year; and

(b) if so, the reasons for delay in completing the work and the time by which it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b). Constitutionally, Govt. of India is responsible for development and maintenance of roads declared as National Highways only. All roads/bridges, other than National Highways, are essentially the responsibility of the State Govts/Union Territories concerned. The road

in question is a State road and Delhi Administration is the executing agency. According to information received from them, except for the portion of Outer Ring Road from Road-Over-Bridge No.22 to Nehru Place, widening of Outer Ring Road is complete. However bituminous work on the widened portion is in progress which is likely to be completed by June, 1991. As regards widening of the portion from road-Over-Bridge No.22 to Nehru Place, the work is yet to be sanctioned. It is likely to be completed within 1 1/2 years from the date of sanction.

Memorandum From Weavers of Handloom Silk Cloth Industry Kancheepuram

[English]

3609. SHRIMATI SUSEELA GOPALAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received a memorandum from representatives of weavers engaged in the handloom silk cloth industry in Kancheepuram Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) The main request of the silk handloom weavers of Kancheepuram, Tamil Nadu is that the Govt. may import raw silk to meet shortage and check its prices.

(c) A proposal to import 200 tonnes of raw silk is under consideration of Government.